

A close-up photograph of a tea plant branch with several large, dark green, serrated leaves and small, unopened buds. The lighting is soft, highlighting the texture of the leaves.

Emerge

With One Heart
IN CHRIST

***A Guidebook for the
Next Two Years at Concordia***

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CONCORDIA
Lutheran Church

 **emerge**
with one heart

***“For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God
for salvation to everyone who believes”***

-Romans 1:16

The gospel of Jesus is the most powerful message in the world. It **renews** lives, causes **growth** in faith, and propels us to **go** to others with the love of Jesus. Concordia Kirkwood has thrived over the years because of our belief in and reliance on the power of the gospel. I'm deeply thankful for those who've set the precedent of Concordia's gospel-driven ministry.

As we approach 150 years as a congregation, it's time for us to take another step in the gospel journey together.

Concordia, it's time to EMERGE!

The word “emerge” means “to rise from anything that surrounds, covers, or conceals.” We have traveled through the pandemic together. By God's grace we adapted. We learned. We persevered. And God kept us together as one. It's time to emerge from the pandemic with one heart to **renew** what God has already established among us, to **grow** as individuals and as a congregation,

and to **go** beyond the walls of our church to connect others with the love of Jesus.

You have a crucial role in our two-year EMERGE initiative. I, along with our entire ministry team, encourage you to:

- Consider how God is calling you to EMERGE from whatever it is that holds you back from full engagement in the gospel.
- Pray for God to use EMERGE not just to improve our campus and programs, but to change hearts and lives.
- Engage in EMERGE through events, worship and study
- Commit fully to giving generously

As your new Senior Pastor, I am delighted to serve among you and excited to see how God's plan for Concordia will EMERGE over the next two years and beyond!

-Pastor Steve Bongard



Concordia Milestones

1874

Concordia Lutheran Church is
Founded & Dedicated on Madison Avenue

1948-1954

Concordia relocates to its current
location on Kirkwood Road

1974

Concordia Lutheran School is renamed
Christ Community Lutheran School

2002

The Concordia Center and the new
gymnasium are built and dedicated

2019

The Center for Christian
Education is built

AND

NOW...

...Now We *EMERGE*

With One Heart in Christ to Renew, Grow, and Go



RENEW

Put on your new nature, and be renewed as you learn to know your Creator and become like Him. ***Colossians 3:10***



GROW

Be joyful. Grow to maturity. Encourage each other. Live in harmony and peace. Then the God of love and peace will be with you. ***2 Corinthians 13:11***



GO

Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. ***Matthew 28:19***

Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too. ***Philippians 2:4***

**RENEW
OUR
HEARTS**

God renews pandemic-broken hearts through the life-giving words of Jesus. We are inviting everyone to make a renewed commitment and to move forward in their faith and generosity journey.

We are asking for everyone to make a renewed commitment to:

- **Being in the word**
- **Worship and prayer**
- **Serving others**
- **Giving generously**

Renewal of hearts will happen through preaching and worship series, classes, and online opportunities to read scripture, pray, and get involved in serving.

**RENEW
OUR
MINISTRIES**

The pandemic drastically changed how we were able to do ministry. Emerging from it means renewing all of our ministries:

Re-engage volunteers.

To emerge means re-engaging with those who serve and providing opportunities for new people to serve. Training for our current staff and/or addition of a discipleship coordinator position will help to make this happen.

Re-engage with people distanced by the pandemic.

We need to intentionally find ways to re-engage. This will include renewed visitation ministry to those who are homebound, new strategies to connect with people online, and intentional outreach to those who have become inactive.

Take the events we already do well to the next level by intentionally including outreach and further connection opportunities.

Concordia does some large events really well: Night to Shine, Turkey Blessing, Vacation Bible School, and so on. We need to ensure that these events provide the opportunity to make further connections.

**RENEW
OUR
MINISTRIES**

A renewed face to the community is an important first step toward Concordia being a welcoming place for new people.

To renew our campus we must finish what we started:

- **Tear down the old education building, expand parking, and renovate existing space.**
- **Explore creating a memorial garden for interment of ashes.**



**GROW
AS
DISCIPLES**

In order to reach others, we commit to grow personally in our own faith and to grow in our connection with others. We will:

- Create more opportunities for people of all stages in life to intentionally connect with one another in groups centered on sharing life and growing in Christ together.
- Develop paths for personal growth in following Jesus.
- Equip people for spiritual conversations in order to grow our personal capacity to connect with others.
- Close the discipling gap. In the past Concordia has done well at discipling children and older adults. We need to close the gap by intentionally discipling young adults through middle-agers.

**GROW
AS
LEADERS**

Concordia has been blessed with good leaders, both on the staff and in the congregation. We need to intentionally raise up leaders of all ages to impact the church and the world with the love of Christ.

Unless we intentionally create and nurture a leadership pipeline, we will struggle in the future to find leaders capable of helping us all navigate through the often uncharted pathways of life. We need leadership training and mentoring for staff and congregants alike. And we need to purposefully raise up leaders among us.

GROW



**GO
DIGITAL**

Expand digital engagement to intentionally go where people are online.

If pandemic has taught us anything, it's that online is here to stay. Just as corporations who viewed online as merely an add-on have withered or died (Sears, Kodak, Borders, etc.), so churches that ignore the online communication revolution will likely not thrive. Just as the inventions of the printing press played a large part in the 16th century reformation, so now the inventions of online videos, podcasts, and virtual connections are tools for us to use to reach people with the Good News of life in Jesus. We need to develop and implement a strategy for what online ministry looks like at Concordia. Or to be more clear, we need to really develop what a hybrid ministry means for us and how we can leverage both in-person, online, and hybrid communications to help more people find their hope in Christ.



GO

**GO TO
LOCAL
NEIGHBORS**

Deepen partnerships that serve the community:

- Christian Friends of New Americans
- All Nations, University City
- Re-engage with Meacham Park
- Explore Comfort Dog ministry

**GO TO
INTERNATIONAL
NEIGHBORS**

Help Christ Community International in Kawete, Uganda, to build a secondary school where young people learn to love Jesus.



One Church. One Vision. One Fund.

All giving for inbound ministry, capital improvement, and outbound ministry will be combined into a single fund from which all investments in mission and ministry will be paid. The One Fund approach allows us to celebrate the total giving of our congregation toward a clear, focused vision.



***Our
Total
Giving
Goal*** •
•
*for the next
TWO YEARS*

**\$10.6
Million**

**\$5.6
Million
Ongoing
Ministry**

**\$5
Million
Emerging
Ministry**

Two Year Investment

Current Ministry

Personnel	\$2,530,000
Property	\$613,000
Programs	\$428,000
CCLS & Lutheran South	\$1,458,000
Debt Service	\$243,000
Outbound	\$328,000
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2-year total for ongoing:	\$5,600,000

Emerging Ministry

Campus improvement	\$4,000,000
Digital Engagement	\$380,000
Leadership Training/ Discipleship Gap	\$20,000
Uganda Secondary School	\$400,000
New Local Partnerships	\$200,000
<hr/>	
2-Year total for emerging:	\$5,000,000

Total 2-year goal:

\$10,600,000

Your Generosity Journey

As a congregation, we are growing in generosity, as we Emerge as individuals, families, and together as a church. We are at an important crossroads in the history and future of Concordia. God is at work!

Generosity is a lifestyle in which we share all that we have, are, and ever will become as a demonstration of God's love and in response to God's grace. What we have has been given to us by God. The resources we possess are assets to be invested in the Kingdom.

We should be motivated by the gospel of God's grace, not by an expectation of getting something in return. Generosity is a journey; most of us don't start at the destination. God is the potter; we are the clay. To grow generous is to be continually shaped by God's self-giving in Jesus.

GROWING 
Generous



Most people don't start with boundless giving (some do, Zacchaeus is one example). We invite you to simply take the next step in the journey. Where are you now? How can you take the next step? Baptized into Christ, you are part of the family of Jesus, a family intended by God from the beginning to bless all of creation. All followers of Jesus, no matter their age or financial resources, get to participate in God's generosity to the world. So what's your next step?

NOW is the best time to grow your generosity. Sometimes we think "someday I'll be able to be generous – when I get that job, get that raise, finish paying for college, when I retire." But the reality is everyone can grow generous, whatever their life circumstance. If we wait until we think we have enough, we'll never get started or take the next step. God doesn't wait to be generous to us; He blesses us with the dawn of each new day, giving us our daily bread. Every day, all over the globe, God showers his blessings on creation. He invites you and me, no matter what our life circumstance, to join in the moment.

Three Truths to Guide You

THE AMOUNT MATTERS

01

We've all heard slogans like "every gift counts" or "no amount is too small." But those phrases are usually meant to meet a budget goal. As we give gifts to our gracious Father, we realize that God loves a cheerful giver. Therefore, the amount of our gifts does matter. In fact, the amount matters to God when it is an amount that matters to us.

YOU DETERMINE THE AMOUNT

02

So how do we determine an amount that matters to us? Is there a formula we can use or a percentage guide that will help? As we consider the depth of God's love for us in Christ, we get to determine the amount of our gifts to Him. God loves a cheerful giver.

GIVE ACCORDING TO YOUR ABILITY

03

As we seek to determine amounts that matter to us, we consider the different abilities God has given us to be generous. We don't need to be wealthy to be generous. God gives all of us the ability right now to determine amounts that matter to us and be generous according to our ability.

F.A.Q.

Frequently Asked Questions

Question: How does Emerge differ from building fund capital campaigns and the annual one-year pledges to an operating budget some churches seek?

Answer: Emerge is a two-year vision-focused initiative rather than a three-year traditional capital campaign or one-year operating budget stewardship appeal. Emerge is a generosity journey we are all taking together. Emerge is a direct result of the strategic planning efforts of Concordia's staff and elected leaders.

Concordia is one ministry on one mission together with a shared vision to Emerge together so future generations here in Kirkwood and beyond follow Jesus as Lord. We are inviting all of God's people who know and love our church to Emerge together on this generosity journey.

Our prayer is that Emerge will, over the next two years, provide resources for both ongoing ministry and new, emerging ministry. Emerge will accelerate generosity to equip us to more effectively touch our community with the Good News of Jesus' love for all. We are inviting everyone who loves and appreciates Concordia – congregants, regular attenders, and friends – to further generosity in proportion to how our Lord blesses each of us so future generations will continue to hear the Gospel message until our Lord returns. This vision-focused, holistic approach allows us to celebrate the total generosity of everyone whom our Lord has called to gather at Concordia.

Question: Emerge sounds great, but what will happen if we miss our target of \$10.6 million in commitments? Is there a chance the project I'm most excited about would not be completed?

Answer: We expect to reach the goal, despite the challenge and opportunity it represents! However, if we do fall short, we will adjust expenditures proportionally based on priorities determined by our elected leaders, in close collaboration with our staff. We are committed to clearly communicate any shift with the congregation at that time. Unless we fall well short of the goal, none of the initiatives will be totally eliminated. Our Concordia leaders carefully evaluated the viability of this God-sized, yet reasonable giving goal, after careful consideration of the pertinent data and consultation with trusted advisors who help hundreds of local churches accelerate giving each and every year.

Question: I am interested in ensuring that our church carefully manages our budgetary needs, long-term indebtedness, and investment in ministry opportunities. Will my generosity through Emerge make a difference?

Answer: As God's faithful stewards, we share your interest in these essential ministry investments. Your Emerge gifts make the difference! The \$10.6 million Emerge generosity goal includes funding towards well-conceived growth initiatives, adequate working capital to continue our current ministry, and freedom from burdensome long-term indebtedness that could hamper future ministry impact. As God's people joyfully respond, Concordia's financial leaders will carefully manage and allocate gifts to carefully identify spending and investment priorities consistent with our mission, vision, and values. Concordia's generosity investment plan was arrived at through prayerful seeking of God's will amongst senior elected and called leaders and other trusted advisors, consistent with voters' approval of our annual operating budget. Our church is abundantly blessed and we are confident that with God's help we will achieve our goal.

Question: Will I (we) have the ability to designate my generosity to a specific Emerge project that really excites me?

Answer: Yes. All gifts will be honored and received with joy and thanksgiving. We also ask those who regularly worship at Concordia to generously respond to the full Emerge vision, over the next two years. As congregants, we will entrust our elected leaders with the responsibility to prioritize and manage new initiatives and investments, as God's people generously respond to the challenge and opportunity Emerge provides to us. Your leaders are committed to ongoing communication to the congregation. They will also seek voters' action as needed, consistent with Concordia's constitution and by-laws, as investment decisions are considered.

Question: I am really excited about the great things God is doing through Emerge. I want to make a portion of my gift from stored resources. Who should I contact to discuss a gift of stocks, investments or property?

Answer: Giving in this manner can be a very tax-efficient way to give, and we'd love to help facilitate this gift for you and answer any questions. If you have any questions regarding Emerge gifts of marketable securities or real estate, you can contact Larry Watson at lwatson@ckhome.org.

Question: I don't have any stock, investments, or property to make a stored resource gift. In addition to my regular generosity is there any other way I can give?

Answer: There are many ways that God blesses each of us with treasures. Think about one of the most expensive possessions you own, besides your home or vehicle. Maybe it is a valuable coin collection that is gathering dust in your basement; or a motorcycle you no longer ride; or a piece of jewelry you inherited or received but no longer use. Perhaps you are an artist, hobbyist or skilled craftsman, you might consider how you can use your God-given talent to expand your

generosity toward Emerge. For example, a seasoned wood worker might create something and market it, committing the proceeds to God's glory through Emerge. Pray about this and consider how our Lord might be nudging you to commit stored resources you no longer need or use the talents He provides for His work through Emerge.

Question: In addition to my commitment to giving, how can I also engage/participate in Emerge?

Answer: We want every member of the Concordia family to commit to a spiritual journey with us, focused on letting God transform our hearts to respond to His generosity. Transformed hearts lead to loving and following Jesus in all of life. God transforms hearts through Bible study, prayer, Sunday morning sacramental worship, and small group gatherings where Word, friendship, prayer, and service all come together. We are confident this deepening of your faith will result in a life of growing generosity. This may mean getting started giving, becoming more regular or intentional in your giving, or as led by the Holy Spirit, you may be called to boundless generosity without restraint, with full trust in the Lord. Our hope is that everyone in the Concordia community will prayerfully seek God's guidance as they generously respond to all his blessings through Jesus Christ. Our fervent, bold prayer is for 100% engagement of those who call Concordia their spiritual home to Emerge.

Question: I like the initial clear communication of this Emerge vision and want to stay connected. How will I be updated on the progress of Emerge projects?

Answer: We will provide frequent updates on the real life impact of our Emerge initiative as well as on resource allocation over the next two years via all our communication platforms: The Front Page, Connections, our website, during weekend worship, email, our Ministry One app, Facebook, and more.

A close-up photograph of a tea plant branch with several large, dark green, serrated leaves and small, unopened buds. The background is dark, making the leaves stand out.

KEY DATES

October 17- November 21:

Emerge Generosity Sermon Series

November 5:

Early Commitment Night

November 20-21:

Commitment Weekend

January 2022-December 2023:

Giving Season

Concordia Lutheran Church

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